GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1126
ANSWERED ON:01.03.2001
US AND BRITISH WARSHIPS CAPTURED IN INDIAN EEZ
AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA;ALE NARENDRA;CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH;LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY;SUKENDER REDDY GUTHA

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the warships of America and Britain were captured recently surveying the maritime areas of India;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the follow-up action taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES)

(a) & (b): On 28th November, 2000, a US Navy Survey Vessel USNS Bowditch was detected 30 Nautical Miles East of Car Nicobar On investigation, the ship indicated that it was carrying out oceanographic survey.

On 6th December, 2000, a UK Royal Navy Vessel HMS Scott was sighted at about 190 Nautical Miles from Diu on the West Coast o India. The ship indicated that it was carrying out military survey for the Ministry of Defence of UK and had declined to furnish any further information. The ship was again detected to be operating 90 to 138 Nautical Miles from Porbandar during 12-16 January, 2001.

(c) The Government regards the operation by the US and UK Naval vessels within the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) as violation of the United Nations Convention on the Laws of the Sea III (UNCLOS III) and the Indian Maritime Zones Act, 1977, as i prior approval was not obtained for conducting such operations. A strong protest with the US Government through its Embassy in Delhi has been lodged. The Government also took up the matter with the British High Commission in Delhi expressing India`s concerns on such unauthorized operations in our EEZ. It has been conveyed to both the Governments that such activities without prior approval of the Government of India will not be permitted in the Indian EEZ.